## **Peter Hammill**

## Shell

Turn a card, turn a page, The action sure to start, Second-stage reaction To illogical thoughts on random lines -In a Borges dream we move toward The writing of lives.

Leave it out, leave it in, no edits -With a shout, with a grin I said It was a certainty that I'd arrive In an Escher sketch We walk around the drawing of lines.

The character uncertainty As he contemplates his lot And tries to move with urgency Though he's rooted to the spot.

On the brink, on the edge, But lately what I think, What I said escapes me In a flash, a tiger burning bright -Does the visionary trance obscure The burgeoning night?

And she said "What are you doing?" And he said "What do you think?" Oh, no, what on earth are we doing?

The characters procrastinate On the threshold of the door; There's something here that fascinates, Though the meaning's still unsure And the plot so thick. Is it some kind of history? Sketch the thumbnail to the quick. Oh, even though it's full of contradiction, Though it's flawed in the design This is no fiction, It's a lifeline.

Here we are, there we went, full circle, Shooting stars, heaven-sent, Turned turtle on the beach Our shells are left behind Life a library, like a memory Of our ghost-written lives.